

Dead Angels

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Summary: YAOI and ANGST. It's a 1x2/3x4 story. That means HeeroxDuo/TrowaxQuatre. Quatre dies fighting; how does Trowa deal?

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Nothing's the same. It's never going to be the same again. The very air has changed. Other people can't sense it as much as I do, I don't think. But then, others don't have the reasons I do.

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I should have known so much better, I berate myself, punching the pillow my face is buried in. I am Nanashi. I am never "can never" be anything more. If I ever even think I have reached a state of humanity, I am wrong. I am to remain Nanashi for all my life. Nameless. And with that comes the inferred tag-on "one with no name has nothing of anything else. No home, no family, no emotion, no life. As one girl once told me, long ago, I have nothing to take away. But I _want_ something, something I had no right to yet wanted back so badly"

I roll over onto my back and lie staring up at the ceiling, drowning myself in my thoughts, pushing them down onto myself, blanketing myself in their thick oppressiveness. Someone told me once I had the eyes of the dead, and that's how I must look, gazing blankly at the ceiling. But I was dead before I met an angel on earth, and now I'm dead again, my period of life gone with the boy who gave it to me. There are no more chances left for me to regain the fledgling vitality a sunkissed angel gave me.

I know he wouldn't want me to remain this way. I just can't help it. Loneliness has been my insistent companion for such a long time. I should have known better than to hallucinate his departure.

Why do angels die? How could Quatre Raberba Winner have died? _How_? Angels can't die. They're not supposed to.

I roll back over. I can't stop moving, fidgeting. Catherine " she's here for Quatre's funeral as well " she says that whenever she comes in to check on me at night, I've fallen out of bed, and she has to pick me up and uncurl me from my fetal position and put the blankets back over me so I don't die of cold since being stupid Trowa I leave the window open. She gets that worried, anxious, mother-hen look to her eyes. I really can't stand it, and someone should tell her that she shouldn't worry over the likes of me.

This is getting me nowhere.

Everywhere is the memory of Quatre. Just his memory, like this sacred golden thing in my heart that no one can touch. I take almost fierce delight in that. No one can reach into my heart and rip him out. Though inside, my heart is devouring itself, it dares not touch that beautiful remembrance of Quatre.

I wonder when I will regain my mask, the mask I let Quatre burn. I need to gather up it's ashes. I need to become Nanashi again. It's what I've always been, but I let myself be "

If Quatre were here, he'd say I had never been Nanashi, and just look up at me with those sparkling amaryllis eyes of his, speaking silent adoration. And just that " just hearing anything out of his mouth " I'd accept it. Because I know he'd never lie to me, just like I know he'd never hurt me.

Damn it, I've got to stop. I'm just going around in little circles like one of those damned little goldfish in one of their damned little circular bowls, going around all day and chewing on their damned sawdust like cows and their damned cud.

Can goldfish hurt the way I can? Can they lose Quatre the way I can? Can they lose their hearts to angels the way I can? Or do they just swim around endlessly and are happy at that?

I get up, because I stay in that room one minute longer I'm going to scream, or punch the wall, or get a gun and seek out the creators of the Gundams and shoot them all one by one for what they did to Quatre. For building the stupid mechas, those stupid machines that cost him his own precious life. For adding fuel to the war's fire, without caring about the death of angels. For giving him a choice that was no choice, for having him carry the torch of peace in one hand while holding a sword in the other, for in the end shoving him into that Gundam and murdering him on the battlefield.

There I go again.

I stumble out of the doorway. I'm pretty tired. I haven't really been getting much sleep. Or if I have, it's blurred into the day and I can't tell one apart from the next. Sleeping nights blur with endless days and nothing matters because it's just another meaningless cycle

I have to endure through, somehow.

I pause at the threshold of the living room. The living room is a familiar, warm place. There's that _huge_ TV that Quatre just _had_ to plunk right straight in the center of the room. And the sofa and armchairs surrounding it are quite comfortable, as I know from experience. Some nights we'd come into this particular living room and sit down and sip some tea and just silently love each other. I'd never experienced anything like it and for once in my life was glad of my natural reticence.

Everyone's there, Heero, Duo, Wufei, Catherine, Relena, Hilde, Rashid, Abdul, the whole happy crew. Heero, Duo and Catherine have taken command of the sofa and everyone else is scattered around the room. They're watching a movie which Duo probably picked, it's that old. It's called _Titanic_, about some badly-made piece of machinery that cracked in half and "plunk!" right down the Atlantic.

They're at one of the turning points in the movie "when that Rose person is whining, "I'll never let go, Jack." Hilde and Relena and Catherine have taken over the Kleenex box, which surprisingly enough Rashid often returns to. Wufei's looking politely bored. The Maguanacs are all suspiciously shiny-eyed. Duo's hanging on Heero's arm, pulling the Japanese pilot down by pushing all his weight onto the arm. "I'll never let go, Heero," he's wailing in an imitation falsetto.

"Baka, do you want to cut off my circulation?" Heero asks with a slight snort that Duo obviously takes as approval. He leans more of his weight on Heero's one arm and keens even louder, "I'll never let GOOO~OOO!"

"You'd damn well bett- TER! DUO!" Heero protests as Duo's weight drags him down onto the floor. Duo starts laughing hysterically on the floor as if he and Heero are the only people in the room. I guess Heero can't help it, he starts laughing helplessly as well. The whole room starts to chuckle at the braided boy's antics.

Laughing. Laughing when Quatre's funeral is being held tomorrow. How can Duo laugh? How can anyone laugh?

But there's something wrong. Duo's laugh is taking on a ragged tone, and all of a sudden he's crying and holding his head in his hands, shaking with the shame and still with an echo of laughter that he's trying to hold on to. The room falls silent except for the movie's continuous, meaningless babble and Duo's laughter mixing with his sobs.

The girls remove themselves from their various positions at once and kneel to Duo's assistance, totally surrounding him with miscellaneous sayings of, "Oh my God Duo, are you alright? What's the matter, are you okay?" as if the answer that _no_, he's not okay isn't obvious or something.

Heero looks up, backing away a little from the protective knot of women, and for a moment he meets my eyes. I'm still standing there on the threshold looking in. That's what I've done all my life "stood on the outside looking in, to where people actually live. Maybe that's what I admire about Heero. Even when he doesn't understand his

emotions, he acts on them. That's why he's with Duo.

He sends a message through a cobalt-winged envoy asking, _Trowa, come inâ€|help me or something, and maybe help yourself too._

And I relay a message back, saying, _Take care of Duo. He needs you more than anyone now._

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Heero nods slightly in response and I know he understands what I'm trying to say. He draws an arm around the boy huddled on the floor, who's crying like there's no tomorrow, and laughing as if that's the funniest damn joke in the world. Rashid thoughtfully turns the movie off. Even Wufei is looking concerned, and though Justice Boy isn't about to get all teary about anything, he's obviously concerned. Heero gently pushes through the small crowd of women and tells them, "I can take it from here." Relena immediately gets to her feet and nods at the other people in the room, taking charge almost unconsciously. Wufei leaves at once, not because an onna's giving orders, not Wufei, but because it probably got through even to him that this was not a good moment to be intruding on. Hilde looks back worriedly at Duo, but Heero just nods curtly, clearly wanting everyone to leave. Everyone understands, and I quickly move out of the way as the room's population exits as a whole.

I can't help taking one very last look when everybody's gone, just peeking back to see what's happening. Heero's drawn Duo into a tight embrace, right on the floor where they are, and Duo's sobbing into his shoulder, his arms wrapped tightly around Heero's neck. I can barely make out what he's saying, and what I do hear doesn't make me feel any better. He's telling Heero, "It's my fault, it's my fault because I'm his friend, Heero, and because I'm Shinigami and I didn't warn him about it well enoughâ€|why did I have to be his friend, damnit, Heero, why do I have to love anyone when I know being with me is going to kill them? Heero, I should have done something, I could have done something, anything, Quat put his life on the line more than once to save me and I never returned the favor Heeroâ€|and now he's _dead_, and I didn't do _anything_â€|"

I never thought Heero was capable of sensitivity, really, but there you have it. Heero whispers back, "It's not your faultâ€|koi," he says, plainly hesitant and maybe even scared to use that word, "you couldn't have done anything to save him. He died a hero's death."

Duo looked up when he heard "koi" â€" obviously he and Heero have had discussions upon discussions over that - and his face is streaked with tears, his dark indigo eyes like so many shards of glass. "Ai shiteiru, Heero, and because of that you'll die one day, just like Quatre did."

"Don't cry," Heero says softly, and wipes the tears away from Duo's cheeks. Duo snuffles.

And if I didn't know any better, I'd swear there was a tender, grateful shine to the perfect soldier's eyes as he cups Duo's chin and brushes a kiss over his lips.

I turn my head away. I can't take it. The emotions so clear between

the two. Did I look the way Heero did just now whenever I gazed on Quatre? Had I ever looked thatâ€¦complete?

So many emotions are barraging me at once, and it's just not fair. It's as if they're rabid creature someone let out of a cage to rush at me and bite me and eat me and spit out my strangled bones.

Envy. Duo can cry all he wants. After all, he has Heero, doesn't he? He has Heero to hold him and comfort him, whenever Heero can break that stupid façade he feels the necessity of ascertaining every time Duo makes some small show of emotion. Duo has a person in whose arms he can take refuge in. He has a shoulder to cry on if he ever feels the need.

Guilt. Because I should be glad that Duo's got someone to take care of him when he needs it. He may be street-smart, but still, he's an emotional baby, seriously. I shouldn't be upset because he has someone and I don't anymore.

But I'm at the mercy of what I feel, and if I act on my emotions I'll be walking over to the kitchen, grabbing the closest knife I can find and slitting my wrists, and then maybe while I cross down into Hell if I meet Quatre going up to Heaven he'll be sad and indignant and a little angry at me. I can't suicide, because I know it's something that would hurt Quatre and that Space Heart of his which he must have left behind a little piece of, a little piece of the Space Heart in Nanashi, imagine that.

I can only be angry that Duo dares to cry over my Quatre, that he dares show emotion over what had been the one thing I could really call mine. It sounds stupid and possessive? Yes, but I don't care. It's true, you know. Quatre had been mine, and he had been so willingly, and I had been his, and I had been so willingly. And death did us a cruel parting, and I'm never going to forgive Shinigami for this, and I'm never going to look at that manic braided God of Death the same way ever again.

I go back inside, I go back inside to my room. I fling myself back down on my bed. I tumble into an endless dream, a dream where the fingers of sunkissed angels are pressed tight to their chest for hope that maybe they can keep the blood inside the body, dreams filled with lengths of brilliantly crimson waves that tumble over the carcass of Sandrock.

And most of all, dreams filled with a pair of blue eyes that sparkle and belong to a dead angel I can say I will love forever.

End
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